

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

January 30, 2014

The Honorable Barack H. Obama
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President,

In light of record breaking and life threatening cold weather across the nation this winter, we are writing to request that you prioritize the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) in your Fiscal Year (FY) 2015 budget proposal by including no less than \$4.7 billion for this program that provides critical support to our most vulnerable citizens.

LIHEAP is the main federal program that helps low-income households and seniors with their energy bills, providing vital assistance during both the cold winter and hot summer months. LIHEAP households are among the most vulnerable in the country. According to the National Energy Assistance Director's Association (NEADA), more than 90 percent of LIHEAP recipients have at least one household member who is a child, elderly, or disabled, and 20 percent of households contain at least one veteran. For these households, LIHEAP funding has been a lifeline during challenging economic times. Access to affordable home energy is not a luxury – it is a matter of health and safety.

We understand the ongoing discretionary budget challenges. However, we are deeply concerned that funding for LIHEAP has declined more than 30 percent in recent years. Moreover, the number of households eligible for assistance continues to exceed available funding. Sequestration has further exacerbated these funding challenges. According to NEADA, the total number of households receiving LIHEAP assistance has declined by 17 percent between FY 2010 and FY 2013, from about 8.1 million to 6.7 million. Nearly 1.5 million vulnerable households have lost access to critical LIHEAP assistance and struggle to pay for the basic necessity of home energy in addition to other essentials like food and medicine.

Funding has declined, yet energy costs have remained high, reducing the purchasing power of LIHEAP assistance. Recipients have seen their average LIHEAP grant reduced by more than \$100 since 2010, from \$520 in FY 2010 to \$406 in FY 2013. Meanwhile, the Energy Information Administration (EIA) projects that average winter home heating costs will rise six percent to \$977 per household this winter. The average LIHEAP grant is estimated to cover less than half of the average home heating costs for a household this winter, meaning that many low-income families and seniors will have fewer resources available to meet other basic needs.

As you finalize your FY 2015 budget request, we ask that you take into account the great need for LIHEAP. We urge you to reprioritize this program within your FY 2015 budget and restore funding to this program to a level no less than \$4.7 billion.

Thank you for your attention to and consideration of this important request.

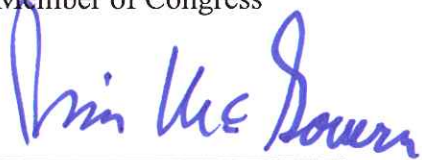
Sincerely,




PETER WELCH
Member of Congress



PETER T. KING
Member of Congress



JAMES P. MCGOVERN
Member of Congress



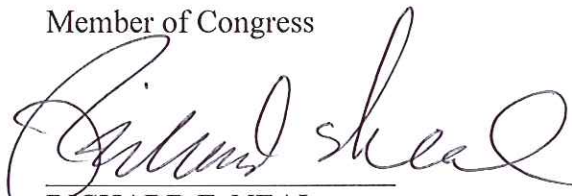
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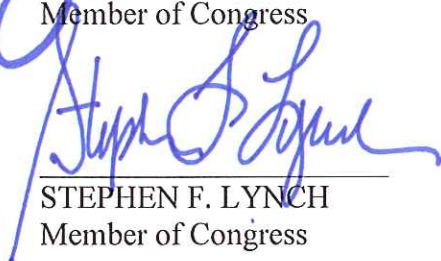


GREGORIO KILILI CAMACHO SABLAN
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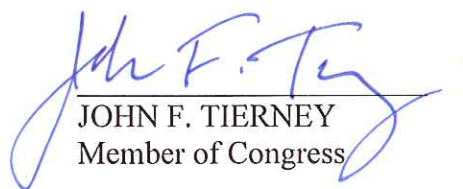
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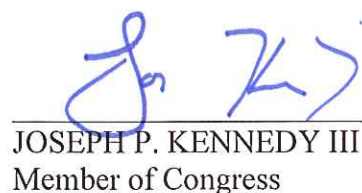

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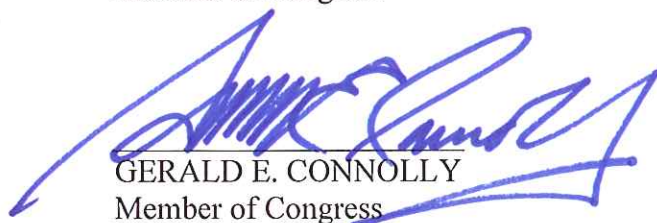

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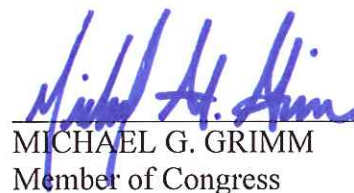

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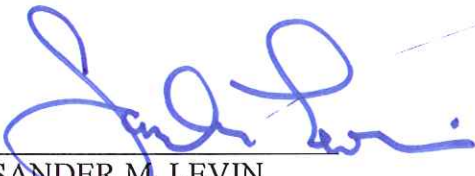

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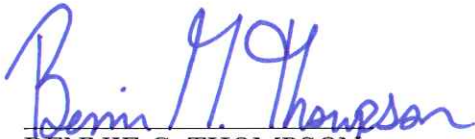
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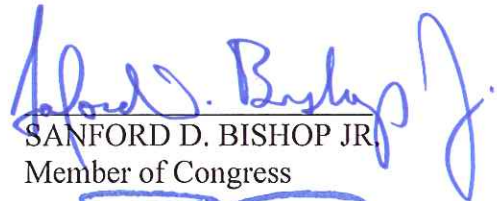
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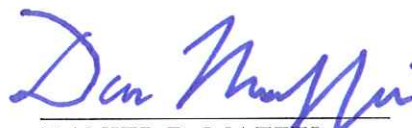
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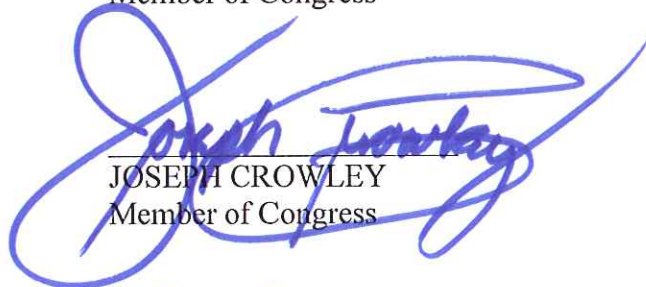
PAUL TONKO
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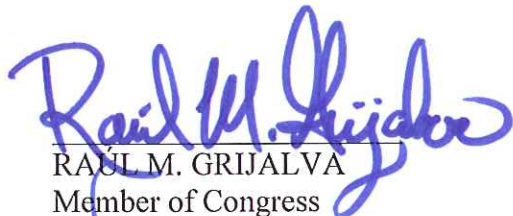
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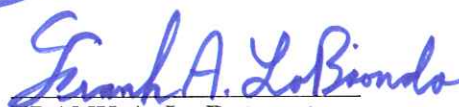
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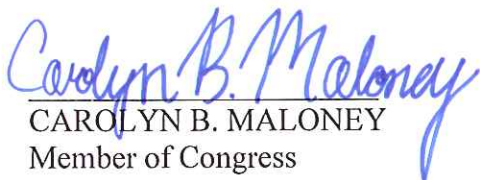
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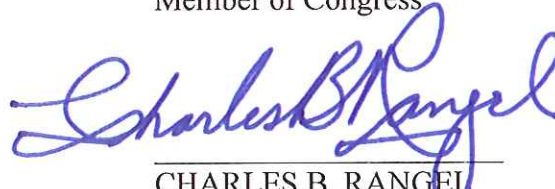
CAROLYN B. MALONEY
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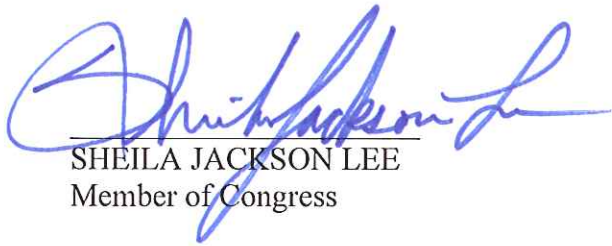
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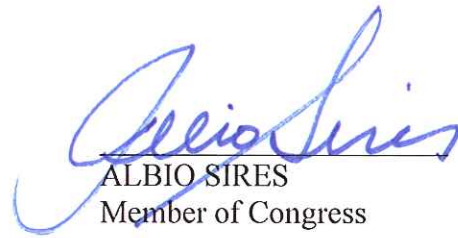


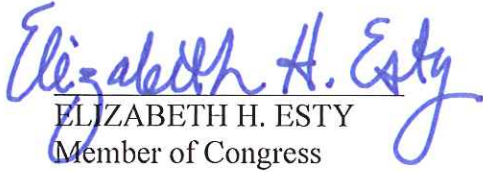
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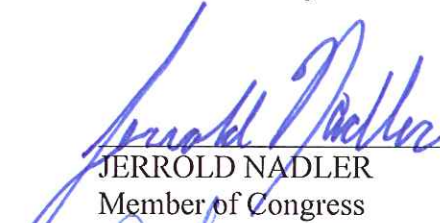

SHEILA JACKSON LEE
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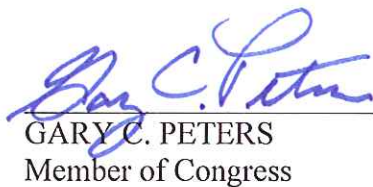

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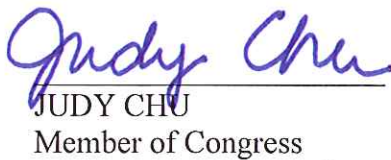

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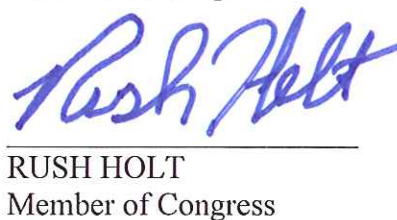

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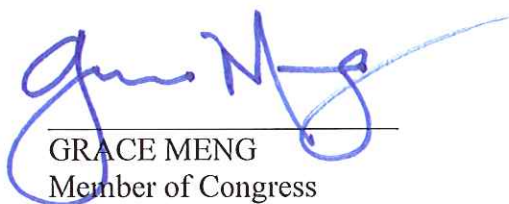

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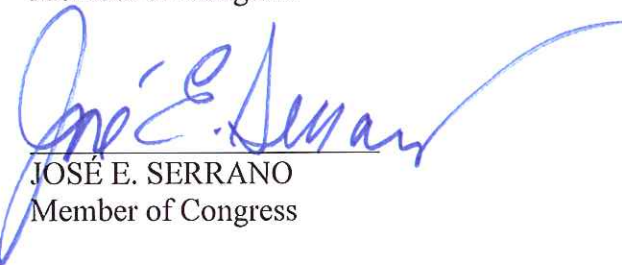
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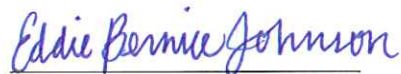
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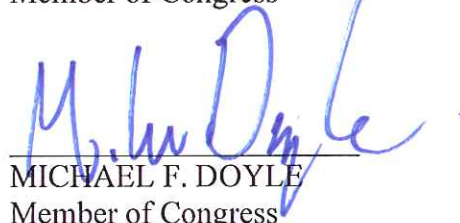
HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON JR.
Member of Congress



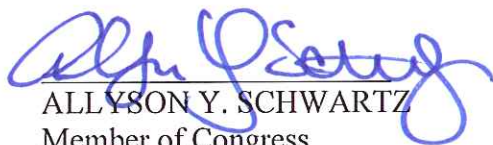
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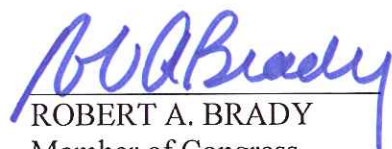
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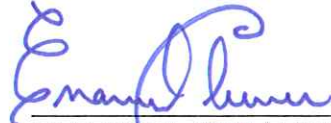
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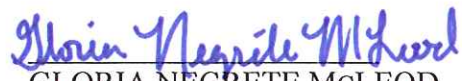
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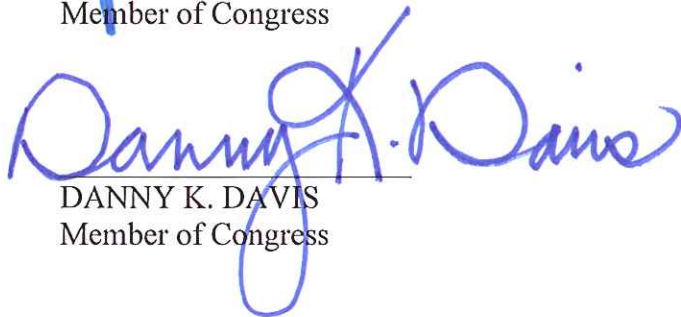
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CHERI BUSTOS
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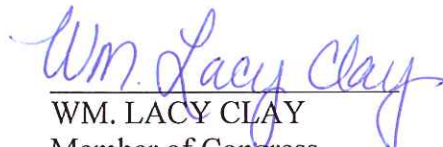
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KYRSTEN SINEMA
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JARED HUFFMAN
Member of Congress


AL GREEN
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TIMOTHY H. BISHOP
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BILL FOSTER
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CORRINE BROWN
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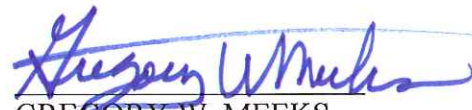

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